THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) The works are in various stages of pre-constraction activities, hence the date of commencement of construction can not be indicated.

Development of Ports

5444. SHRI ANANTA SETHI: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether port-wise plan has been formulated for development in Ninth Five Year Plan;

(b) if so, the fund estimated for development of Paradeep Port in that plan period; and

(c) the details of the amount released so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. An outlay of Rs. 1200 crores has been approved for development of Paradeep Port during the Ninth Five Year Plan.

(c) In the first three years of Ninth Plan, an expenditure of Rs. 552.82 crores has been incurred by Paradeep Port Trust on their plan schemes.

Modernisation of National Highways

5445. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that National Highways span about 52010 Kms. throughout the country;

(b) whether it is a fact that these highways cater for about 40 per cent of the total road traffic;

(c) whether it is also a fact that these roads are in a poor state and in urgent need of broadening, repair and modernisation of safe standards; and

(d) if so, what are the Government plans and time frame for completion of the modernisation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) Yes, Sir.